



GAIL FARBER, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

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November 19, 2012

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE:

B-0  
A3734F

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Gail Farber *Gail Farber*  
Director of Public Works

### **BOARD MOTION OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2011, AGENDA ITEM 15 – FINAL REPORT THE FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING A PROACTIVE TRACKING SYSTEM FOR DEFAULTED OR FORECLOSED PROPERTIES IN THE UNINCORPORATED COUNTY**

On September 27, 2011, the Board directed Public Works to work with appropriate County departments to research the feasibility of implementing a proactive tracking system for defaulted/foreclosed properties in the unincorporated County and report back to the Board.

On November 23 and December 23, 2011, Public Works submitted interim status reports. On February 1, 2012, a final report was submitted. As recommended in the final report, we have monitored the effectiveness of our continued operation. Below is our report.

#### Background

In our final report, our recommendation to the Board was to enhance current code enforcement programs through the use of foreclosed property data. Using monthly updates of properties in foreclosure recently obtained through a subscription with a commercial data service, Public Works plans to generate localized maps of properties in the foreclosure process. These maps will be used to identify areas of foreclosure activity to assist in code enforcement activities. Proactive inspection of these areas will be conducted to monitor whether properties are being maintained in conformance with County codes.

To create an effective program over the long-term, Public Works has worked with the Assessor and Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk to identify a mechanism to track properties that have filed a Notice of Default (NOD), signaling the first step of the

foreclosure process. The Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk currently maintains records of all recorded NODs; however, they are not tied to an Assessor Identification Number (AIN) or property address. By amending existing code provisions, the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk will require that the AIN be included for individual properties as a condition of NOD recording. This will provide the needed tool to identify addresses and locations of properties entering the foreclosure process for monitoring. The Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk expects that the code amendment process will take six to nine months. In the interim, Public Works will utilize a commercial subscription service to obtain the foreclosure data.

It should be noted that in December 2011 the Assessor reported there were 2,736 residential foreclosures in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. Currently, the Assessor reports there are 2,015 residential foreclosures in the unincorporated areas of the County. These numbers are consistent with published reports that foreclosure activity is slowing and that the number of homes lost to foreclosure is at the lowest level since the second quarter of 2007. Lenders have also filed fewer NODs compared to a year ago. Regardless of trends in the economic climate, tracking of properties entering into default is considered to be a useful tool in enhancing code enforcement and property rehabilitation efforts Countywide.

#### Recommendations

Our recommendation to the Board is to continue to utilize existing staff and code enforcement/property rehabilitation procedures with the enhancement of coordinating with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk to maintain an active GIS mapping database of properties entering the foreclosure process by recording NODs. Mapping, tracking, and monitoring of properties in the foreclosure database, along with continued coordination with other County departments, will serve to greatly enhance our communities by helping to focus efforts on early detection to improve existing and future properties before deterioration results in substandard conditions.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me or your staff may contact Dennis Hunter at (626) 458-4006 or [dhunter@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:dhunter@dpw.lacounty.gov).

HT:II

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cc: Assessor, Chief Executive Office (Rita Robinson)  
Community Development Commission/Housing Authority  
Department of Consumer Affairs, County Counsel, Executive Office  
Department of Public Health, Department of Regional Planning  
Department of Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

A3734  
B&S



STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES HELD IN ROOM 381B  
OF THE KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION  
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

Tuesday, September 27, 2011

9:30 AM

15. Recommendation as submitted by Supervisor Knabe: Direct the Director of Public Works to work with the appropriate County departments including: Regional Planning, Public Health, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, County Counsel and the Chief Executive Office to research the feasibility of implementing a proactive tracking system for defaulted/foreclosed properties in the unincorporated County and report back to the Board within 60 days. (11-4227)

**On motion of Supervisor Knabe, seconded by Supervisor Antonovich, this item was approved.**

**Ayes:** 5 - Supervisor Molina, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, Supervisor Yaroslavsky, Supervisor Knabe and Supervisor Antonovich

Attachments: Motion by Supervisor Knabe  
Report  
Video  
Audio

The foregoing is a fair statement of the proceedings of the regular meeting held September 27, 2011, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles and ex officio the governing body of all other special assessment and taxing districts, agencies and authorities for which said Board so acts.

Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer  
Executive Officer-Clerk  
of the Board of Supervisors

By \_\_\_\_\_

The US subprime mortgage crisis and subsequent recession led to millions of Americans losing their homes through foreclosure. Since 2008, foreclosures across Los Angeles County have risen dramatically. We all hope that this trend will end as economic recovery occurs, but the lack of management of these properties and the subsequent negative impacts of them have become a real issue for this County.

In the Los Angeles County, the way we manage a foreclosed/abandoned home is strictly reactive. Our offices get complaints from nearby residents on problems that have gone unattended for months, and this is often after considerable frustration and aggravation for a lack of a proactive approach to this problem.

It is the responsibility of owners, which are often banks, to manage these properties, but this maintenance often does not take place. Blighted and unkempt homes can lower property values, lead to increased crime, and decrease the quality of life for the surrounding neighbors. Owners/banks are required by law to maintain these properties, and we should hold them accountable to do so.

- M O R E -

MOTION

MOLINA \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

YAROSLAVSKY \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

Many jurisdictions have begun creating registries that can track these homes early on in the foreclosure process. By tracking these homes proactively, we can better assure that they are being appropriately maintained.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Public Works to work with the appropriate County departments, including: Regional Planning, Public Health, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, County Counsel and the Chief Executive Office to research the feasibility of implementing a proactive tracking system for defaulted/ foreclosed properties in the unincorporated County and report back to the Board in 60 days.

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